(b) whether it is also a fact that these smugglers were unsuually ordered to be released even before two months and that too without examining the solvency of the person who stood surety for them contrary to the accepted norms; and

(c) if so, what steps Government propose to take against the erring staff of the police and the Customs department?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHR AJIT PANJA): (a) and (b) It is not a fact that seven smugglers involved in smuggling a huge quantity of gold escaped from Porbandar Jail in the last week of September, 1988. Seven Pakistani nationals had been arrested by the Customs Officers at Porbandar on 15th September, 1988 for being involved in the smuggling of gold worth Rs. five crores approximately. They were remanded to judicial custody on 16th September, 1988 and thereafter released on bail on 29th September, 1988 by the Judicial Magistrate First Class Porbandar after accepting a cash security of Rs. 10,000 and surety of Rs. one lakh each with the condition that the accused should not leave the jurisdiction of the Porbandar Magistrate and appear before the Porbandar Customs Officers twice a week. The Customs department found that the surety furnished was that of a dead person and, therefore, moved the Magistrate for cancellation of the bail but the accused had absconded in the meantime. The Judicial Magistrate First Class, Porbandar cancelled the bail and issued arrest warrants against all the accused.

(c) The bond and surety had been accepted by the Judicial Magistrate First Class, Porbandar. Since no involvement of Police or Customs officers has come to light, no action has been initiated against any one of them.

Appeal by Christian churches in Assembly elections

1621. SHRI CHIMANBHAI MEHTA: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Christian churches and priests issued appeals to the electorate to vote in a particular direction in the recent Assembly elections; if so, what are the details thereof;

(b) whether it is fact that some religious authorities issued appeals to electorate to vote in a particular direction in Tamil Nadu Assembly elections; if so, what are the details thereof; and

(c) whether Government have taken any measures to counter this religious propaganda, if so, what are the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI HANS RAJ BHARDWAJ): (a) The Election Commission has stated that no information has been received by it about any alleged appeal on religious grounds issued by churches, priests etc. in the recently held general elections to the Legistive Assemblies in the States of Nagaland and Tamil Nadu. So far as the general elections to the Legislative Assembly of the State of Mizoram is concerned, there have been reports in the press about such an alleged appeal by some churches. However, the text of the appeal is not available with the Election Commission or with the Government.

(b) No such information has been received either by the Election Commission or by the Government.

(c) Statutory provisions exist even now. According to section 123 (3) of the Representation of the People Act, 1951, the appeal by a candidate or his agent or by any other person with the consent of a candidate or his election agent to vote or refrain from voting for any person, *inter-alia*, on the ground of religion is a corrupt practice. The Model Code of Conduct for the guidance of political

parties and candidates evolved by the Election Commission also stipulates *inter alia* that there shall be no appeal to caste or communal feelings for securing votes; mosques, churches, temples or other places of worship shall also not be used as forum for election propaganda. Further, in order to prevent the misuse of religious institutions for political and other purposes, the Religious Institutions (Prevention of Misuse) Act, 1988 has been enacted.

Vacancies of LDCs in MCD

1622. SHRI BIR BHADRA PRATAP SINGH:

SHRI DHULESHWAR MEENA:

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a good number of posts of Lower Division Clerks are lying vacant in the various Departments of Municipal Corporation of Delhi;

(b) whether it is also a fact that in the recent past, the concerned authorities of the Corporation have drawn a panel of the candidates for the posts of LDCs who have qualified in the written examination which was conducted to promote their Class IV employees to category III; and

(c) if so, what is the latest position in this regard and by when the deserving candidates who have been enlisted in the panel will get their promotion?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV): (a) to (c) The panelists against the direct recruitment vacancies have either been appointed or have been given offers of appointment. The remaining 10 per cent vacancies reserved for recruitment on promotion from Class IV employees are to be filled up from among the candidates who qualify in the typing test which is yet to be held.

Evasion of Sales Tax and Income Tax by M/s. Pal Estate

1623. SHRI BHAGATRAM MANHAR: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that M/s. Pal Estate, 54A Krishna Cloth Market, Chandni Chowk, Delhi are evading sales tax and income-tax for the past five years;

(b) if so, what are the details in this regard and what action has been taken to recover the sales tax and income tax amount from the company;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the above company have invested huge amount in another company, viz., M/s. Inder Singh Harmanjit Singh, 841 Katra Neel, Chandni Chowk, Delhi; and

(d) if so, the details of transactions held between the above companies and the source of their funds being raised for the purchase of the premises presently being held by the two companies?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI AJIT PANJA): (a) and (b) There is no concern operating by the name of M/s. Pal Estate from 54A Krishna Cloth Market, Chandni Chowk, Delhi.

One Shri Pal Singh is carrying on cloth and real estate business from the aforesaid premises.

Shri Pal Singh has filed his returns of Income for the assessment years 1978-79, 1979-80, 1980-81, 1982—83, 1984-85 and 1985—86 under the Amnesty scheme and income-tax has been paid on the income returned for these assessment years. For assessment years 1981-82 and 1983-84 returns were filed in normal course Notices have been issued to Shri Pal Singh to file income tax returns for 1986-87, 1987-88 and 1988-89.

(c) and (d) There is no information on record indicating any investment either in the name of Shri Pal Singh